30

POL 14 VIETS
531

DECLASSIFIED

INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

Saigon 21985

Action
EA
Info
SS
GPM
L
U
SAL
P
NSC
INR
AID
RSR

VZCZCMJA839JIA263
PP RUEHC
DE RUMJIR 21985 0931200
ZNY CCCCC
P 031141Z APR 67
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC PRIORITY
BT

001137
1967 APR 3 AM 7 39

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE SAIGON 21985

SUBJECT: DOCUMENTS FOR CONSTITUENT ASSEMBLY

CA ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS HAVE ASKED US FOR MATERIAL WHICH WOULD BE HELPFUL IN DRAFTING ELECTORAL LAWS, PRESS AND PARTY REGULATIONS. WE HAVE LIMITED AMOUNT OF SUCH INFORMATION HERE (E.G. BOOKS ON JAPANESE AND KOREAN EXPERIENCES) WHICH WE WILL MAKE AVAILABLE. WE WOULD APPRECIATE DEPARTMENT POUCHING SOONEST SELECTED STATE ELECTORAL LAWS PLUS ANY FOREIGN PARTY AND PRESS LAWS WHICH WOULD BE USEFUL TO CA.

LODGE
BT

NOTE: PASSED S/S-O, WHITE HOUSE, USIA, DOD, CIA, NSA
4/3/67 8:17 AM

MICROFILMED BY [illegible]

DEPARTMENT OF STATE A/CDC/MR
REVIEWED BY [signature] DATE 10/5/81
RDS ☐ or XDS ☐ EXT. DATE
TS AUTH. REASON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED ☐ RELEASABLE ☑
RELEASE DENIED ☐
FA or FOI EXEMPTIONS

LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

DECLASSIFIED

DECLASSIFIED

532

INCOMING TELEGRAM *Department of State*

SECRET

R 01

140
Action
SS
Info

NNNNVZCZCMJB697SPB131IJIA256
RR RUEHC
DE RUMJIR 21973 0931135
ZNY SSSSS
R 031033Z APR 67
FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON
TO SECSTATE WASHDC
BT
S E C R I E T SAIGON 21973

001164

1967 APR 3 AM 8 09

SAIGON 21973, 4-357 POL 14 VIET S XR POL 15-1 VIET S

EXDIS

FOR THE SECRETARY FROM LODGE.

1. THIS IS IN REPLY TO REQUEST IN YOUR 167131 FOR MY CURRENT THINKING ON FORTHCOMING PRESIDENTIAL ELECTION;

2. I AGREE WHOLEHEARTEDLY WITH YOUR PARAGRAPH 1. THE ONLY BASIS ON WHICH WE SHOULD EVER GET INVOLVED WOULD BE IF THERE WERE A CANDIDATE OF SUBSTANCE WHO WAS STRONGLY ANTI-AMERICAN; HAPPILY THERE IS NO SUCH PERSON ON THE HORIZON.

3. THUS WE HAVE EVERYTHING TO LOSE AND NOTHING TO GAIN BY BACKING ONE OF THE EXISTING POSSIBLE CANDIDATES. IF WE PICK

PAGE 2 RUMJIR 21973 S E C R E T
THE LOSER, WE OBVIOUSLY LOOK FOOLISH AND HAVE NEEDLESSLY CREATED A PROBLEM FOR OURSELVES. BUT IF WE PICK A WINNER, WE WILL THEREAFTER BE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR ALL HIS MISTAKES. WE HAVE A STRONG INTEREST IN MAINTAINING A RELATIONSHIP WITH THE CHIEF OF THE GOVERNMENT WHICH NOTHING MORE NOR LESS THAN CORRECT, IN WHICH WE KEEP OUR WORD ON THOSE POSSIBLY RARE OCCASIONS WHEN WE GIVE IT, AND IN WHICH WE ARE THUS REGARDED WITH RESPECT. WE SHOULD NOT "GET INTO BED", AS WE DID IN THE CASE OF THE LATE PRESIDENT DIEM, WITH THE RESULT THAT WE WERE HELD RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS ERRORS -- AND WITH SOME JUSTICE.

4. AS REGARDS YOUR PARAGRAPH 2, I QUITE AGREE THAT WE SHOULD LEAVE THE SAME IMPRESSION WITH THIEU. ALTHOUGH I HAVE SEEN HIM QUITE RECENTLY, HE HAS NOT REALLY GIVEN ME AN OPENING AND I DOUBT WHETHER I SHOULD MAKE A SPECIAL DEMARCHE. ON MARCH 25, KY RAISED THE MATTER WITH ME, WHICH MADE IT EASY FOR ME TO COMMENT. IF AN EARLY OCCASION ARISES TO SEE THIEU, I WILL HAVE THIS POINT IN MIND.

5. I QUITE AGREE ON THE DESIRABILITY OF HAVING A PROMINENT CIV-

SECRET

DECLASSIFIED

DECLASSIFIED

PAGE 3 RUMJIR 21973 S E C R E T
ILIAN ON A TICKET HEADED BY A MILITARY CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT (THIEU OR KY). THE OPTIMUM ARRANGEMENT WOULD PROBABLY BE ANNOUNCEMENT IN ADVANCE OF THE CHOICE OF A PROMINENT CIVILIAN (HOPEFULLY A CAPABLE ADMINISTRATOR) FOR PRIME MINISTER AS WELL AS A LEADING CIVILIAN POLITICIAN AS VICE PRESIDENTIAL CANDIDATE. THIS WOULD PERMIT FULLER REGIONAL AS WELL AS MILITARY-CIVILIAN BALANCE ON THE MILITARY TICKET. IF THERE SHOULD ONLY BE ONE CIVILIAN ON THE MILITARY SLATE, WHICH WOULD CERTAINLY BE LESS DESIRABLE, THEN IT MIGHT BE BETTER FOR HIM TO BE A CANDIDATE FOR VICE PRESIDENT RATHER THAN FOR PRIME MINISTER. THE VICE PRESIDENT, AFTER ALL, IS ELECTED HEREAS THE PRIME MINISTER IS APPOINTED.

6. AS YOU KNOW, THERE ARE REALLY NO CIVILIAN POLITICIANS IN THIS COUNTRY IN OUR MEANING OF THE WORD. THE TWO LEADING CIVILIANS MENTIONED AS CANDIDATES ARE SURVIVORS FROM THE DAYS OF CONSPIRACY AGAINST THE FRENCH AND AGAINST DIEM, AND ARE ESTIMABLE PATRIOTS, BUT NEITHER SUU NOR NUONG WOULD BE LIKELY TO RUN THE GOVERNMENT WITH ANYTHING LIKE THE EFFICIENCY OF THIEU OR KY. WE HOPE THAT MORE CAPABLE CIVILIAN POLITICIANS WILL EMERGE DURING THE FIRST PRESIDENTIAL TERM.

PAGE 4 RUMJIR 21973 S E C R E T

7. WITH RESPECT TO YOUR PARAGRAPH 3, I CONSIDER IT IMPORTANT THAT THERE BE A RECOGNIZED MILITARY MAN ON ONLY ONE TICKET, NOT ONLY FOR SYMBOLIC REASONS BUT SO AS TO HOLD THE MILITARY TOGETHER DURING AND AFTER THE ELECTION. KEEPING THE MILITARY TOGETHER IS THE "LAW AND THE PROPHETS" AS FAR AS VIET-NAM IS CONCERNED, AND WILL BE FOR SOME TIME. THERE SHOULD NOT BE A POLITICAL CONTEST, FOR EXAMPLE, INVOLVING MILITARY MEN ON BOTH SIDES -- OR ON MORE THAN TWO SIDES. I WOULD EXPECT -- AND HOPE -- THAT ONE TICKET WOULD EMERGE WITH THIEU OR KY AS CANDIDATE FOR PRESIDENT AND THAT THE OPPOSING TWO OR MORE TICKETS WILL BE EXCLUSIVELY CIVILIAN IN THEIR MAKE-UP.

LODGE
BT

DECLASSIFIED